

Colleges under fire in social mobility commission report

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

A hard-hitting report by the government's social mobility commission has attacked college performance and recommended funding for employment outcomes rather than recruitment.

The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission's 348-page document concluded: "Current policies are likely to be insufficient to address entrenched and unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment and inactivity."

It had used damning Ofsted statistics to paint a bleak picture of colleges while calling for a wide range of changes.

Among its ten recommendations was that "colleges in the future be paid by the results they achieve for their students in the labour market and not the numbers they recruit".

It received short shrift from Malcolm Trobe, deputy general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders.

He said: "There are number of factors that influence how well students fare in the labour market, the obvious ones being the local economy and the career they aspire to."

"While colleges do all they can to prepare students for the world of work, they cannot be held responsible for finding jobs for them and it is unreasonable to suggest that this be used to hold them to account."

It further suggested a "participation payment" for young people doing traineeships.

It said: "The government should consider introducing a youth credit (or participation payment), conditional on their participation in high quality work-related support and educational programmes, perhaps along the lines of current traineeships (with funding drawn out of the Bursary Fund and Child Benefit for 16 and 17-years-olds and out of Jobseeker's Allowance for the over-18s)."

And on funding, it said: "Reforms to voca-

tional qualifications look positive, though there remains inadequate information on courses and apprenticeships, and too little support for non-academic routes. There is also excessive complexity in local funding."

Meanwhile, the commission, chaired by former Labour Health Secretary Alan Milburn, used Ofsted inspections to further criticise the sector.

"Ofsted inspection data lays bare the challenges for the sector, including the fact that at the end of August 2012, 1.5 million learners in the post-16 learning and skills sector were in provision that was rated less than good," said the report, published on Thursday.

It added: "There is a need to have a far greater focus on improving the quality of further education provision, which is the largest provider of education to those who do not do well at school."

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, hit back at the report's findings.

She said: "Relying heavily on a snapshot of Ofsted data from more than a year ago does not provide sound enough basis for critiquing the social inclusion that colleges undertake."

"The report is missing the point of the critical work done by colleges that needs to be looked at more closely and comprehensively."

"The rich offering of FE to social mobility has been under-acknowledged in this important report."

She added: "We support the report's emphasis on quality as we strive for world class standards while remaining focused on the needs of the learner."

"We have long argued for a more intelligent accountability framework that includes destinations, value added and distance travelled as well as employer and learner feedback."

The Association of Colleges declined to comment.

Unhappy skills minister singles out councils

Birmingham City Council
Borough of Poole Council
Derby City Council
Derbyshire County Council
Gloucestershire County Council
Herefordshire Council
Lincolnshire County Council
Shropshire Council
South Gloucestershire Council
Stoke-on-Trent City Council
Tower Hamlets Council
Waltham Forest Council



Local authorities have had their knuckles rapped over the tracking of 16 to 18-year-olds' education status. See in depth report on page 5



Our Mann follows Hancock to West Nottinghamshire
See page 8

Shane Mann, FE Week director of operations, adds to the wall Skills Minister Matthew Hancock started

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Minister in Elite tag 'hint' after Premier Colleges launch

Paul Offord

@PaulOfford

A "new breed of elite colleges" appears to have been hinted at in the same week as a group of providers have branded themselves Premier Colleges.

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock mentioned the word "elite" four times in a recent speech about the future of colleges.

And it is understood Mr Hancock is considering official use of the term 'elite college' for the best performing, which could require a particular specialism or a high level of employer engagement.

However, a spokesperson at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills declined to comment on whether there were plans for such a new college brand.

But Mr Hancock's comments have sparked concerns about FE appearing to become an elitist sector, with 157 Group executive director Lynne Sedgmore saying she was "very cautious" about the term.

Nevertheless, Mr Hancock's reference to "elite colleges" came during a speech to the Edge Foundation on Tuesday, where he explained his vision for the future of FE.

In his speech, Mr Hancock said: "I want to see the emergence of a new breed of elite colleges, which lead the nation — indeed lead the world — in their area. I want to talk to you today about what reform looks like.

"About what we've done so far and what we're changing. And in particular, the role colleges can play — including as elite institutions, leaders in their communities."

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, said: "FE colleges are absolutely

dedicated to maintaining the highest possible standards.

"But I'm very cautious about using the word elite — with all its connotations about exclusiveness — in a sector that is fundamentally based on social mobility, social inclusion and creating opportunities for all."

The minister's comments came as Skills Show sponsors grouped together to brand themselves Premier Colleges.

A Skills Show spokesperson told FE Week: "A select group of 20 of the UK's leading and highly responsive colleges and a university, with vocational education and training at the heart of their businesses, have joined forces to form a new working association called Premier Colleges".

All but three of the sponsors are from the Midlands (see list on FE Week website).

The spokesperson added: "The colleges involved in the Premier Colleges group have not been selected — they have voluntarily invested in the [Skills] show as a public demonstration of what they contribute to FE and their commitment to the promotion of the sector," she said.

She added: "All colleges in the group collectively cover a wide geographical area — beyond the Midlands — and all have supporting The Skills Show as a key motivation, among others that are largely specific to their individual colleges."

The national Skills Show is being held at the NEC Birmingham on November 14 to 16.



Yorkshire provider loses £500k funding over audit 'concerns'



Bradford Telegraph & Argus

A West Yorkshire training provider is to have its £500,000 Skills Funding Agency contract terminated after an audit raised concern about learner records and financial dealings.

The agency confirmed to FE Week that its agreement with iCOCO Training, based in Cleckheaton, would end in early December.

However, an agency spokesperson said it was "not conducting any investigation into any matters relating to iCOCO Training".

She said: "The decision was made following concerns about the quality of learners' records and financial claims submitted to the agency by iCOCO that came to light during a recent audit.

"The provider was formally notified on September 10 and accordingly the contract will terminate on December 9."

The provider offers training courses for hairdressing, customer services, business administration, child care and beauty therapy.

The agency said either party could terminate the contract with three months' notice, without the need to give a reason.

"All learners have now been transferred to either Kirklees College or Calderdale College in order to complete their learning," said its spokesperson.

Allisonne Reilly, managing director of iCOCO, declined to comment.

Top Careers Colleges tweets:



@Annette1Hardy

'Career colleges' won't happen unless Mr Gove decides that children can drop academic subjects at 14.



@tomstannard

Career colleges story....ok....but heavy 14-19 focus again. All ages matters, as #piaac reminded us.



@JulianGravatt

Legally Career Colleges will be subsidiaries of FE Colleges and practically they're an extension of the 14-16 direct recruitment initiative



@CareersDefender

Career Colleges? Weren't they called technical colleges in the 60/70s? Are we back to a 2 tier model?



@DavidHeadViews

Can't see Lord Baker's "career colleges" attracting many prospective Etonians. But they'll certainly keep working class kids in their place.

Niace demands Pupil Premium cash for family learning

Paul Offord

@PaulOfford

The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (Niace) wants Pupil Premium cash from the government to fund a huge expansion in family learning across the country.

It unveiled a report on Friday, called Family Learning Works, outlining how family education programmes improved child and adult numeracy, literacy and other key skills.

Family programmes aim to encourage family members to learn together, providing learning to both adults and children and provide progression for the adult to other learning.

They are usually delivered by teachers from FE colleges, local authorities, or charities at primary schools.

And David Hughes, Niace chief executive, has called on the government to encourage schools to spend their Pupil Premiums on family learning.

The national Pupil Premium budget was £1.875bn in 2013-14, with schools — who have freedom to spend the funding how they want — attracting £900 per disadvantaged child.

Niace would like at least 2.3 per cent of this money diverted to family learning, which



would amount to £45m in England.

Mr Hughes said: "Across the country, there are examples of family learning programmes which have transformed the prospects for adults and children. But these programmes need to be the norm in every school and community.

"There is funding available to pay for this through the Pupil Premium. Family learning must be part of a national strategy, formed of local partnerships, to give adults and children from all walks of life the opportunities to become learners and reap the wide benefits of learning."

The government launched the Pupil Premium scheme in April 2011 to help reduce inequalities between children eligible for free school meals and their peers.

Lady Howarth (pictured) chaired the Niace inquiry that produced the report. She said: "Evidence shows family learning could increase the overall level of children's development by as much as 15 per cent for those from disadvantaged groups.

"It could, in one generation, change the lives of a whole generation. We would be foolish to miss such an opportunity."

The report called for family learning to become a key element of future government planning for improving post-16 education and adult employment prospects.

It stated: "We want family learning to be seen as an effective use of school funding, to ensure the parents and carers of children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are offered high-quality learning opportunities.

"In addition, we want to see family learning integrated into strategies to engage those furthest from the labour market and improve employability where, evidence shows, learning can be hugely effective — perhaps more so than any other single intervention."

Nine in court over alleged A4e fraud

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

Nine former employees of welfare to work provider A4e have appeared in court charged with fraud.

The six women and three men face more than 50 counts between them, including forgery, possessing an article for use in fraud and conspiracy to defraud.

Among the accused is a former contract manager, a former administrator and seven former recruiters who were employed across three A4e offices in South East England.

It is alleged that they forged documentation to support fraudulent claims to the Department for Work and Pensions for reward payments, under the Aspire to Inspire programme, which ended in July 2011. The allegations date from February 2009 and follow an investigation by the Thames Valley Police Economic Crime Unit.

A Crown Prosecution Service spokesperson said: "Under the terms of the contract, payments were made when the scheme successfully placed individuals in employment.

"It is alleged that many of the reward payments related either to people who never

attended A4e or to clients whom A4e had not successfully placed in employment. The contract was to deliver motivation and training and to assist people to find employment."

The nine defendants appeared at Slough Magistrates' Court on Monday, October 14, where they spoke only to confirm their details. No pleas were entered.

District Judge Tan Ikram granted them each unconditional bail to appear at Reading Crown Court on Monday, October 28.

An A4e spokesperson said: "The investigation by Thames Valley Police relates to alleged incidents which date back to 2009 and were uncovered by A4e's own internal controls.

"We referred the matter to the DWP, which then referred the allegations to the police.

"The alleged incidents all relate to old paper-based contracts which used systems that have since been replaced.

"We are fully co-operating with the police to ensure the investigation can be concluded quickly and are therefore unable to comment further on an ongoing enquiry."

Ines Cano-Urbe, contract manager, aged 37, of Madrid, Spain, was charged with one count of forgery and one count of conspiracy to defraud

Zabar Khalil, administrator, 34, of Dolphin

Road, Slough, was charged with five counts of forgery and one count of conspiracy to defraud.

Charles McDonald, recruiter, 43, of Derwent Road, Egham, was charged with seven counts of forgery, one count of possessing an article for use in fraud and two counts of making articles for use in fraud.

Nikki Foster, recruiter, 30, of High Tree Drive, Reading, was charged with 10 counts of forgery.

Julie Grimes, recruiter, 50, of Monks Way, Staines, was charged with 10 counts of forgery.

Aditi Singh, recruiter, 30, of Elmshott Lane, Slough, was charged with three counts of forgery and one count of possession of an article for use in fraud.

Bindiya Dholiwar, recruiter, 27, of Reddington Drive, Slough, was charged with seven counts of forgery.

Dean Lloyd, recruiter, 36, of Rochfords, Coffee Hall, Milton Keynes, was charged with 13 counts of forgery.

Yasmin Ahmad, recruiter, 38, of Colchester Road, Southend-on-Sea, was charged with two counts of forgery.

[Proceeding]

Apprenticeships fall

The number of new 16 to 18 apprentices fell nearly 15,000 last year, from 126,300 in 2011/12.

The 12 per cent drop, comparing provisional statistical first release (SFR) figures, came at the same time as the number of all-age apprenticeship starts also fell by more than 7,000.

In 2011/12, provisionally there were 502,500 apprentice starts across the board, but that was down to 495,100 last year.

A government spokesperson said: "Participation for under-19s has declined overall as a result of the renewed focus on higher quality. For the first time, all apprenticeships now involve a job and as such some low quality provision was ended.

"This particularly affected the 16 to 18 apprenticeships, as programme-led apprenticeships were concentrated in that age range."

In February, *FE Week* reported the first full year fall in under-19 apprenticeship starts in three years. Final, rather than provisional, figures showed 1,800 fewer 16 to 18 apprenticeships last year than in 2010/11 — a 1.4 per cent fall.

Commons grilling for Elmfield, Syddall and SFA

Chris Henwood

@Chris_Henwood

Former Elmfield director Ged Syddall (pictured) and Skills Funding Agency finance director Paul McGuire look set for a "no-holds-barred" grilling by MPs over allegations of apprenticeship malpractice.

It is understood they will be called before the House of Commons Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee by the end of next month in light of an investigation into Elmfield by BBC's Newsnight.

A senior current member of Elmfield staff is also expected to be summoned with Mr Syddall having quit as the firm's director amid the BBC probe — although it is understood he remains majority shareholder.

The Newsnight report, supported with information uncovered by *FE Week*, aired on Friday, October 4, and focussed on Elmfield's dealings with workers at supermarket giant Morrisons.

It was alleged Elmfield received agency money for apprenticeships that employees had declined. Elmfield told Newsnight that investigations had been carried out, uncovering "no evidence of malpractice," although a further investigation had since been launched.

Committee chair Adrian Bailey told *FE Week*: "I am putting it to the committee that we invite Mr Syddall, Mr McGuire and a senior member of Elmfield staff to discuss allegations made and the contractual arrangements between Elmfield, Morrisons and the agency.

"I want to find out the extent of Mr Syddall's current involvement, including details of the proportion of shares he owns in the company.

"Our questioning would be wide-ranging, no-holds-barred and include how much money he's made from the business and its public funds."

It would be the second time Mr Syddall has



appeared before Mr Bailey's committee. He gave evidence in April last year, when he said Elmfield's entire income of £30m in 2011/12 came from public funds. He also defended his own £3m company dividend.

Meanwhile, Ofsted — whose inadequate grading of Elmfield in July prompted an agency notice of serious breach and a ban on new learners, along with Mr Syddall's resignation as chief executive — carried out a two-day monitoring visit last month. It was carried out at least three months early, at the request of Skills Minister Matthew Hancock, and the resulting report, published this month, told of "reasonable" and also "significant" progress in key areas.

An Elmfield spokesperson said: "We are pleased to see that we have been able to demonstrate progress in all areas of our work examined by Ofsted in a very short space of time."

The monitoring report, which unlike full inspection reports gives no overall grade, saw the agency lift its blanket ban on new Elmfield apprentices. But the notice of serious breach remains in place.

A spokesperson for the agency, which is still investigating apprenticeship malpractice claims against Elmfield, said: "We will assess any request from Elmfield to start new apprenticeships on a case by case basis."

Morrisons stopped contracting with Elmfield in August, when NCG (formerly Newcastle College Group) took over the apprenticeship training contract. Neither Morrisons nor NCG are accused of any wrongdoing.

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Colleges hoping for VAT ‘anomaly’ end after MPs’ letter and PM pledge

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

Sixth form colleges could be about to see the end of a “longstanding inequality” on VAT after more than 70 MPs wrote to Education Secretary Michael Gove calling for a change in the law.

England’s 93 sixth form colleges currently have to pay VAT on goods and services, while schools and academies are reimbursed.

But a cross-party group of 74 MPs, led by Education Select Committee chair Graham Stuart, urged Mr Gove to support the introduction of a VAT refund scheme.

“MPs across the House feel strongly that it is wrong that sixth form colleges still have to pay VAT, when school and academies can reclaim those costs,” said Mr Stuart.

Their letter follows a pledge from David Cameron, during Prime Minister’s questions on October 9, to “look carefully at the issue”.

And now a Department for Education spokesperson has told *FE Week*: “In 2011/12 we ended the unfair funding between schools and colleges for post-16 students by putting both on the same funding rate. We have put in place protection until 2015, to make sure they can plan ahead.

“Colleges are treated differently to schools when it comes to VAT because of their legal status. We are looking into whether funding arrangements should be reviewed to take this into account.”

The MPs behind the letter all represent constituencies that either contain or are served by a sixth form college.

Among them are former Labour Education Secretaries David Blunkett and Alan Johnson, Liberal Democrats president Tim Farron and Green Party MP Caroline Lucas.

The VAT issue is believed to cost sixth form colleges an estimated £30m per year and,



according to research from the Sixth Form Colleges’ Association (SFCA), has resulted in colleges being forced to drop courses such as modern foreign languages and further maths, as their funding reduces.

James Kewin, deputy chief executive of the SFCA, said: “We are delighted that so many MPs from across the political divide have united to campaign for an end to this longstanding inequality.

“Sixth form colleges are the most effective and efficient providers of sixth form education in England. However, changes to the way that 16 to 19 education is funded will see them lose a greater proportion of their income than any other type of sixth form provider — a VAT rebate would help sixth form colleges to maintain their high standards.

“We are not asking for anything that school and academy sixth forms do not already receive — the current VAT treatment of sixth form colleges amounts to a tax on learning that redirects funding away from the front line education of students.”

The SFCA report *Unlocking the potential of Sixth Form Colleges* was published on Tuesday, October 15. It highlighted how the additional investment from a VAT rebate would be used by the sector and the benefits it would bring.

It said: “At present, sixth form colleges are required to pay VAT on their purchases, but unlike schools and academies they are not reimbursed for these costs. This is a historic anomaly that the Department for Education estimates would cost £20 million per year to rectify.

“As this report highlights, the return on the government’s investment would be significant.

“In addition, it would help to rescue strategically important, but less popular courses, such as modern foreign languages and further maths, which colleges are being forced to drop as their funding reduces.”

The apprenticeship champion line-up



Chloe Gailes



Karen Lowry-Hall



Nichola Mitchell

Chris Henwood
@Chris_Henwood

One of these three women will be crowned apprentice champion of the year.

Chloe Gailes, aged 28, Karen Lowry-Hall, 31, and Nichola Mitchell, 22, have battled it out for the honour, but must wait until next month to find out who’s won.

The former apprentices were whittled down from a shortlist of 10 before going to a public vote, which ended on Friday.

Chloe, from Knutsford, represents Greater Manchester, Cheshire and Staffordshire, and works for Barclays. She studied with Mid Cheshire College.

Karen Lowry-Hall, from Kidderminster, is an employee at Worcestershire’s Community Housing Group, and represents the West Midlands. She studied with Kidderminster College.

Nichola Mitchell, from Wigan, is an employee at BAE Systems and represents Lancashire, Cumbria and Greater Merseyside. She studied with Winstanley College, in Wigan.

The award, now in its second year, is sponsored by City & Guilds. Last year’s winner, Jenny Westworth, completed an advanced apprenticeship in aerospace engineering and now works at BAE Systems.

Karen Woodward, interim national director of apprenticeships at the National Apprenticeship Service, said: “We’re very excited to be running the apprenticeship champion of the year competition again this year, and our three finalists are fantastic examples of the vital contribution apprentices make to businesses around the country.”

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock said: “We want to make it the new norm for young people to either go to university or take an apprenticeship. Competitions like this, which showcase the best of apprenticeships, will make that a reality. It is important we continue to raise awareness and inspire young people to take apprenticeships. Chloe, Karen and Nichola are an inspiration and example to other young people in achieving this.”

The winner will be announced at the National Apprenticeship Awards at The Skills Show, in Birmingham, on November 14.

Agency restructure sees two directors remain but four out

Paul Offord
@PaulOfford

Three directors and a chief information officer have been identified as among the first to go in a programme of Skills Funding Agency job cuts that has left more than 1,000 staff facing an uncertain future.

Julie Robson, executive director for growth (Midlands and North), Sally Stewart, executive director for people, Richard Field, chief information officer, and Marinos Paphitis, executive director provider management (South), will leave next year.

The agency told *FE Week* they would not be replaced, so the total number of staff on its executive management team (EMT) would be halved to four.

Chief operating officer Paul McGuire (pictured left) will stay on in the EMT to lead the operating division. Keith Smith (pictured right),



executive director of funding and programmes, will continue with his brief and chief executive Kim Thorneycroft will remain in post. An EMT vacancy to lead the standards and services division is due to be advertised over the next month.

The agency is also preparing to cut the number of its senior managers from 36 to 23 by April.

An agency spokesperson said: “The agency has just announced a restructure which will see its executive management team being reduced

by 50 per cent and its directors by approximately 35 per cent in the 2013-14 financial year. Once this phase has been completed, it is the agency’s intention to reduce the headcount of the rest of the organisation.”

More than 1,000 agency workers, below senior management level, were warned on September 23 their jobs could be under threat as part of a second phase of the job cuts in response to the “Civil Service Reform Agenda”.

The agency confirmed the final number of job losses had still not been determined. Tony Conway, industrial officer at the Public and Commercial Services Union, told *FE Week* staff meetings about the job losses would be held at each of the agency’s 13 offices around England by the end of next month.

The first meeting took place in Coventry on Thursday, September 12, and was attended by around 30 staff.

He said: “The staff had already had a lot of change imposed on them over the last couple

years. I think a lot of them are still pretty shell shocked after this latest announcement.

“I know the local rep was pleased with the turnout at the Coventry meeting and there was a lively discussion about the job cuts. It is too early to say at the moment whether there will be any form of industrial action, as we don’t know the full scale of job losses yet and the period of time they will be imposed over: “The priority for the moment is to speak to as many members as possible about their fears over job security and how they want to proceed.”

The agency has shed 600 of its 1,900 staff in the last four years through cost-cutting schemes launched in October 2010 and December 2011. In April this year, Business Secretary Vince Cable wrote to the agency warning that its administration budget, which includes salaries, was expected to drop £8m, to just under £85m for 2014-15. The agency delivers £4.1bn of skills training through contracts with more than 1,000 providers.

FE Week in depth report by Rebecca Cooney

Councils 'not tracking' 16 to 18s

Skills Minister Matthew Hancock (pictured) has criticised a dozen councils for failing to track 16 to 18-year-olds' employment status.

Mr Hancock wrote to each of the councils following the publication of Department for Education (DfE) statistics showing the number of 16 to 17-year-olds in each area in work, training or education, along with those who were and were not unaccounted for.

The government has not released data for 18-year-olds, but FE Week understands it is the combined data for 16, 17 and 18-year-olds which caused concern over these councils.

Mr Hancock said: "These new figures show

a worrying variation in how well councils track participation in education and training among 16 and 17-year-olds.

"I have written to authorities we have particular concerns about to remind them of their duty to collect this crucial information."

Councils' responses included blaming issues with computer systems, or social and geographical challenges specific to their area, while a few acknowledged the problem and said they were working on it.

Several councils said there had been problems in transferring the responsibility for collecting the data from the Connexions service,

which was closed by the government in 2012.

A few, including Stoke-on-Trent, questioned the statistics, saying they did not match their own data.

A DfE spokesperson said the figures took the academic age of the young people, counting those who were 16, 17 and 18 on September 1, meaning some 19-year-olds would also be included, which was a different method to that used by Stoke-on-Trent Council.

The responses of the 12 local authorities are below.



1. Birmingham City Council

A spokesperson said: "We are currently in the process of responding to the minister regarding his letter."

2. Borough of Poole Council

Vicky Wales, head of children, young people and learning, said: "The transfer from one provider of service to another [Connexions Services to the council's Children's Services] has led to a situation where robust data on individual young people was not consistently available.

"This has presented considerable challenges in the first year of operation including a high level of young people where information on the young person's education, employment and training situation was not known. We are aware that other local authorities have experienced similar challenges during such a transition."

Councillor Janet Walton, cabinet portfolio holder for children and families, said: "This situation is one which has been of concern to the council and we have a comprehensive plan to enable us in future years to track the progress of individual young people."

3. Derby City Council

Councillor Martin Rawson, cabinet member for children and young people, said: "We recognise the current figures in relation to young people not in education, employment or training are not what we would hope. "The council transferred its database which captures these figures earlier this year, and this has resulted in a gap between actual performance and the data which can be submitted.

"We place high importance on tracking the outcomes for young people and we continue to work hard to ensure our data reflects this."

4. Derbyshire County Council

Councillor Damien Greenhalgh, deputy cabinet member for children and young people, said: "There were some initial teething problems with the upgrades to the system which meant we were not able to track what was happening with complete accuracy for a short period of time. However we are confident now that the system failures have been rectified."

He added: "We are confident the latest

figures due to be published in the next few weeks will be a true reflection of what our young people are doing in Derbyshire."

5. Gloucestershire County Council

Stewart King, lead commissioner for education and skills, said: "We are confused by the letter from the Minister for Skills. The Department has published statistics on participation of 16 and 17-year-olds in education and training. They show an improving picture for Gloucestershire with participation rising sharply over the past year and the proportion of young people whose position is 'not known' falling to 3.5 per cent, well below the national average of 4 per cent.

"We have been working closely with schools, colleges and providers to track young people and have made great progress in the past six months to improve data sharing and record what young people are doing. Data for 18 year olds has yet to be published."

Jo Davidson, director of children's well-being, said: "We are concerned about the number of young people who are not participating in education, employment and training post-16 in Herefordshire. We are also concerned about the number of those who we don't know about. "The council has taken action to address these concerns. Following advice and support from other local authorities, a task group set up earlier this year has worked

with local providers of education, employment and training to improve procedures and processes.

"The process of gathering data is now robustly performance-managed and we aim to be among the top local authority performers by this time next year."

7. Lincolnshire County Council

Councillor Patricia Bradwell, executive councillor for children's services, said it had been required to track just 'vulnerable' 16 to 18-year-olds following the demise of the Connexions advice service — but more recently the government said local authorities had to "engage with all young people not engaged in learning or employment".

"So for a period of one year contact was lost with some 16 to 18-year-olds who did not fall into the category of 'vulnerable'. Like other authorities we are trying to catch up on this lost data, but trends clearly show we are making great strides," she said. "What's confusing about the letter we received is that the authorities listed seem to be those who have seen an increase in unknowns among this age group over the last year which would of course cause concern. Yet in Lincolnshire, we are definitely turning the corner and significantly reducing the unknowns."

8. Shropshire Council

Councillor Ann Hartley, cabinet member for children's services — transformation and safeguarding, said: "In June, the percentage of 16 and 17-year-olds who would be classed as 'unknown' in participation terms stood at 5.1 per cent in Shropshire. This is where we have focused our resources in order that

those young people who are classified as Neet have the support to engage with education or training. It is increasingly challenging to track the 18 and 19-year-olds, which do constitute a high proportion of the not known figures overall, as they are a more transient group."

9. South Gloucestershire Council

A council spokesperson said: "For many years South Gloucestershire has had high rates of participation in education, employment and training (EET) by young people. "The duty to follow up these young people to ascertain their EET status and to provide support transferred from an external provider back to South Gloucestershire Council in April 2013.

"We have experienced a number of issues as a result of the transition of both staff and data and the setting up of new management information systems. These have now been resolved and we expect future reports to be a more accurate indication of how young people are doing in South Gloucestershire. This issue remains a high priority for the council."

10. Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Dave Perrett, assistant director of Learning Services, said: "Unfortunately, there are errors in the letter which attribute the wrong figures for Stoke-on-Trent to 16 to 18-year-olds. We are performing well when it comes to properly tracking this age group, beating both the national and West Midlands averages with an encouraging figure of only 3.2 per cent unaccounted for."

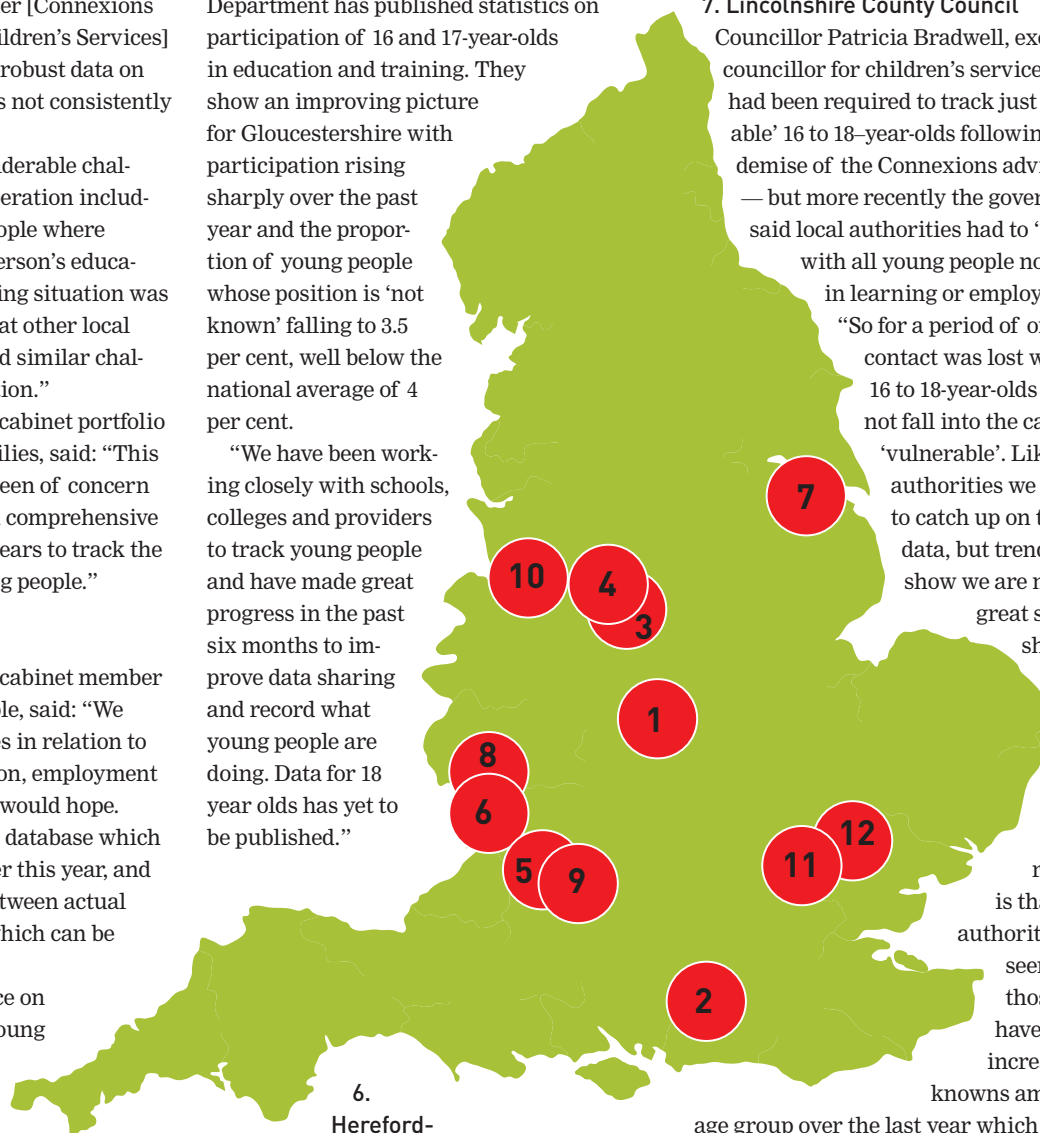
11. Tower Hamlets Council

A council spokesperson said: "The minister's measures do not take into account the unique challenges faced by inner-city boroughs when comparing local authorities nationally.

Tower Hamlets has one of the most dynamic communities in the country with high levels of private rented accommodation and resident churn. These present unique challenges for tracking young people not shared by other boroughs across the country."

12. Waltham Forest Council

Unavailable for comment



Editor's comment

Young deserve better

The social mobility commission's report should serve as a wake-up call to government, not a bat with which to beat colleges.

The commission is right to point out that, "current policies are likely to be insufficient to address entrenched and unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment and inactivity".

For example, it is mind-blowing that there is no funding incentive for a traineeship provider to actually progress trainees into work.

It is also shocking that while 16 to 18 apprenticeship funding goes unspent, colleges, as previously reported by FE Week, are turning away potential 16 to 18 trainees in favour of 19 to 23-year-olds because there's no money left for the younger age group.

And the Skills Funding Agency's 'job outcome payment' for adults is a farce because it can only be paid out to providers when learners either fail their qualifications or walk away early — providing they've won employment.

But if your learner passes their qualification and gets a job there's no such payment.

So there are some simple solutions that the Skills Minister can act on immediately.

Firstly, the ringfence on 16 to 18 apprenticeship funding needs to be loosened to enable colleges to access funding specifically for traineeships.

Secondly, a new single funding system for all 16 to 23-year-old traineeships that incorporates payment by results in 2014/15.

Thirdly, the agency should consult immediately on scrapping its pathetic attempt at a job outcome payment. The sector needs a funding system that fully incentivises positive adult progression.

None of this is particularly difficult and, frankly, it's too important for all our futures to ignore.

Nick Linford, editor

Correction

If there's credit to be given then we at FE Week are keen to see it handed out, so we're happy to correct a story in which a learner had been left out.

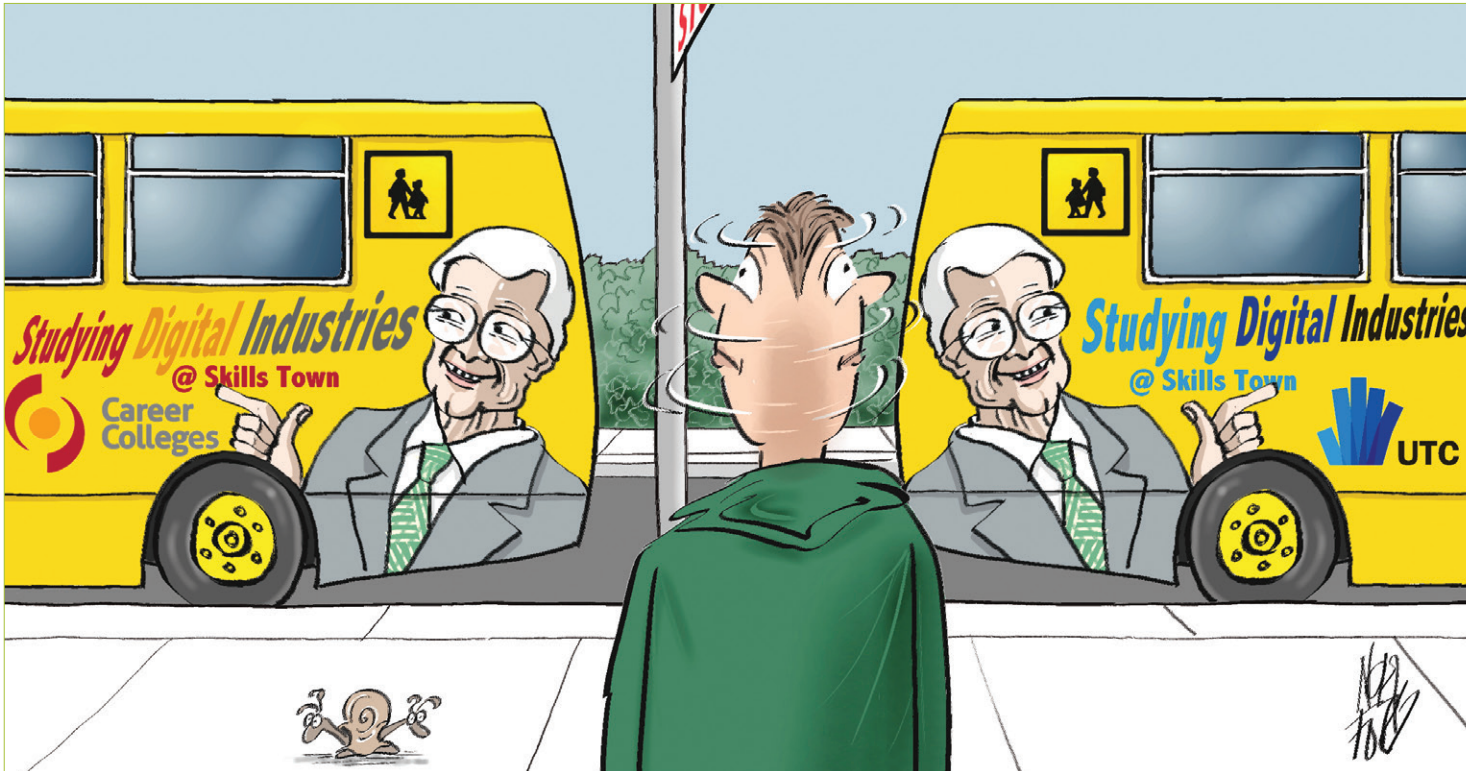
In a page 16 campus round-up tale featuring Hartlepool College, there was only mention of four of the five female engineering students who, between them, won eight out of 11 awards.

The unnamed student was Antonia Fawcett. She won the Gus Robinson Aerospace Cadetship.

The downside of this is that Emily French actually won two awards — including overall engineering student of the year — not three.

Have you spotted something wrong with this edition of FE Week?

If so, feel free to tell us about it, including the page number and story headline, and explain what the problem is. Email us at news@feweek.co.uk with Corrections in the subject line.



Baker's Career Colleges 'risk confusion'

Rebecca Cooney
@RebeccaKCooney

Further education leaders have expressed concern at Lord Baker's plans to establish "yet another" brand of vocational training colleges.

The Tory peer has announced new proposals to create Careers Colleges, focussing on training from 14 years old in areas including hospitality, tourism, finance, health and care and construction. These would be based at existing colleges, follow 14 to 16 direct recruitment funding rules, but require a subsidiary board made up of at least 40 per cent employers.

But sector leaders are worried these would be similar to existing University Technical Colleges (UTCs), a programme which Lord Baker also leads. These independent institutions offer 14 to 19-year-olds vocational training in science, technology, engineering and maths-based (STEM) subjects, alongside the teaching of core academic subjects.

Lynne Sedgmore, executive director of the 157 Group, said: "We are keen to ensure that creating another type of institution catering for 14-year-olds does not further confuse the picture for parents and young people at a time

when recent reports have been critical of guidance processes within the system as it is."

Lord Baker laid out his plans for 40 Careers Colleges over the next four years at the annual Edge Foundation lecture. The first colleges are being set up in Oldham, Oxford, Bromley, Purfleet and Vauxhall Colleges.

The peer denied UTCs and Career Colleges could cause confusion, or had the potential to compete with each other.

"There's a demarcation line. UTCs are for STEM subjects and careers colleges are non-STEM subjects," he said.

Nevertheless, Martin Doel, chief executive of the Association of Colleges, said: "Career colleges are another option for this age group, alongside UTCs, studio schools and direct enrolment in further education colleges. An advantage of a career college might be that they would be a subsidiary of an FE college which means they could share resources, staff and facilities.

"But we are not recommending one option over another — it is the choice of each individual college whether they choose to become involved in any of these initiatives."

Brian Lightman, Association of School and College Leaders general secretary, said: "These new colleges will be good for the students who

can access them, but the reality is that they are expensive to open and will benefit a small number of young people."

Sixth Form Colleges' Association deputy chief executive James Kewin said: "At a time when sixth form colleges are grappling with unprecedented cuts to their funding, we would question the wisdom of introducing yet another type of new and unproven provider."

Lord Baker said: "What Careers Colleges will create is a truly integrated student pathway. I have a high regard for FE colleges, but they've not ever attempted to do in the past what's called a rounded education, they sell courses."

He denied that the planned Career College at Oldham College, which would provide digital content creation training, would compete with Salford's MEDIACITYUK UTC, which is set to specialise in creative and digital industries for the nearby BBC studios. Both colleges are due to open next year.

Alun Francis, principal of Oldham College, told FE Week: Careers Colleges would be run by a central charitable organisation. He added the legal format, how much colleges would pay to have their provision recognised as a Careers College and exactly what support they would be given in return had yet to be agreed.

Your comments on our big stories

Minister attacks FE for allowing learners to 'give up'

Of course FE as a sector has a role to play and it does.
However the Minister [for School, David Laws] would be well-advised to focus attention on the pre-16 stage. Why are so many young people leaving school without proficiency in English and or maths?
And in the very week that the OECD Report demonstrates the appalling tale of poor performance in basic skills in the UK, ministers also need to consider the impact of poverty on young people's lives.
The report demonstrates that it is poverty and inequality that most

explains why Britain and the US stand together as bottom of the performance tables among developed countries. It's an interesting twist on the special relationship.
Mike Hopkins
It's a real pity that the Department has sought to deal with a tough and complex issue in such a 'tabloid' way. Throwing blame around won't help. The starting point should be an analysis of the various groups of post 16 students sorted by GCSE attainment.
Mick Fletcher

Have you got something to say about FE or one of our stories?

Email us with Comments in the subject line at news@feweek.co.uk or leave a comment on our website www.feweek.co.uk
Or, you can write to us at FE Week, 161-165 Greenwich High Road, London SE10 8JA.
Full contact details should be provided and can be withheld by FE Week upon request.

FE Week profile

Rushanara Ali ~ her story

Rebecca Cooney

@RebeccaKCooney

The new Shadow Junior Education Minister talks to FE Week.

As Rushanara Ali's staff show me into her parliamentary office, they seem understandably disorientated by her sudden change of focus from international development to education and young people.

But shadow minister Ali is unfazed by the results of Labour's most recent reshuffle.

She seems to be in her element with her new shadow ministerial brief and once she begins talking on the subject, it's difficult to interrupt.

She is, she tells me, "completely obsessed" with education's power to influence social mobility.

The 38-year-old MP for Bethnal Green and Bow credits her own education in London's East End with her position today.

"I went to some great schools, I was really lucky actually," she says, looking particularly to her secondary school, Whitechapel's Mulberry School for Girls.

"The teachers were very, very ambitious for their kids, it was just brilliant.

"They had a very strong sense that it didn't matter what your background was, you could go anywhere if you put the work in and if you were ambitious and determined."

The first Bangladesh-born person to enter UK parliament, Ali came to England when she was six.

"I remember it being grey and cold," she says.

"I had a lot of family out there [in Bangladesh] — grandparents, aunts and uncles, a large extended family so arriving here was very different."

When Ali's family moved to England in the early 1980s, the London Bangladeshi community was less established, making the contrast between her life in Bangladesh and her new life in Tower Hamlets, East London, more apparent.

"If you have an upbringing in a country that's completely different, childhood memories tend to stick," she says.

"Like all children you miss where you've come from but very quickly you adjust to life."

Education formed a key part of her family life, as her parents were "very supportive" although in different ways.

"My mother was very, very strict and everything was about studying, whereas my father was much more laid back, his attitude was that you should do what you're interested in, which was a good balance actually," explains Ali. "It was very much a case of 'education, education, education' from a very early age.

"There was a discipline of not wasting time, so when we arrived in England, as well as going to school, my mother was absolutely obsessed with us learning Arabic, English and Bengali — she had her programme and she was determined we would get through the education system and there was no getting

away from her.

"All the hours would be taken up in some form of education — in the weekday evenings, it was school and then it was more classes."

Grinning broadly, and clearly not resenting the time dedicated to her education, she adds: "I think the only playtime we had was on a Saturday and Sunday afternoon, it was pretty intense.

"So I credit my education and pathway to both my parents, but particularly my mother because she was determined that all her children but particularly her daughters, got a good education.

"But she probably didn't know what she was getting herself into when I stood for parliament."

Ali went on to study at Tower Hamlets College where she returned to become a governor before she was nominated to stand for election in 2010, and this, she says has made her "a passionate advocate of the FE system".

"When I got to Tower Hamlets College, I was meeting a lot of people who'd gone back to college as mature students," she says.

"So that was a really powerful influence for me because if you're in a school sixth form, you're with the similar age group, but at college you get a real insight into the different points people are starting at and where they end up."

“At college you get a real insight into the different points people are starting at and where they end up”

She left the East End to study politics, philosophy and economics at St John's College, Oxford, but returned in her holidays to conduct research for renowned sociologist and social activist Michael Young, talking to youth workers and young people.

On finishing university, Ali found she was drawn towards human rights law, but, not really wanting to study for and also finance a law degree, she instead got a job with the



then-MP for Bethnal Green and Bow, Oona King, who was also on the international development select committee.

Now, 15 years on, she has come to occupy that constituency seat herself, something she says she's "incredibly proud of".

"It's hugely exciting, but a big responsibility, I think if it's your home seat, if it's the place you grew up in you have a special connection, you know a lot of people in the area," explains Ali.

"The insights you get from a long span of your lifetime really help you to get across where the blockages are, where the problems occur and how those can be overcome.

"Also, I think what's great is that when I say to young people 'I went to your school' or 'I went to your college' it doesn't feel as detached for them." Ali, along with fellow Labour politicians Shabana Mahmood and Yasmin Qureshi, was one of the first female Muslim MPs in the UK.

She was also the first person in her family to go to university and the first student from her school to go to Oxford. With so many

firsts on her CV, questions about being a 'role model' are difficult to avoid.

"I think in terms of when I decided to go to university, it was about what I wanted to do, it wasn't really about what then it symbolises," explains Ali.

"But you are very aware, just like women in parliament, the first intake of women in parliament would have been very aware of the fact that there are others who would look to them — that happens." And, she admits, role models have their place in "demystifying" aspirational places like university or parliament. "Certainly when I went to Oxford, one of my friends went to Cambridge and I think we were probably the only two in the borough who did, and that was important because our teachers could say to their kids 'you should not see Cambridge and Oxford and all the Russell Group universities and so on as places you can't get to'," she says.

"That's why I'm really keen that there are more people from diverse backgrounds who go into politics because then it becomes self-evident, it becomes normal and these places become places that anyone can feel that they can get into if they do the work."

Perhaps the reason Ali seems so poised to make a smooth transition to her new brief is that she sees them as part of the same continuum of improving people's lives and social equality.

"A lot of people say this I know, but education really is the key to all the other things that happen in the community or in a country, and that's certainly what I saw in the east end of London," she explains.

"For many people, the transformation of education has really transformed their lives. And that's a very powerful story."

It's a personal thing

What's your favourite book?

The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood. It takes me back to my FE College, actually, I had these amazing English literature teachers Mary Jones and Helen Coxidge, and it was brilliantly taught

If you could invite anybody to a dinner part, living or dead, who would it be?
Nelson Mandela

What's your pet hate?

There are probably lots of things but I can't think of anything off of the top of my head

What do you do to switch off from work?

Friends, reading novels, family, films — although I rarely get time to go to the cinema now

What did you want to be when you grew up?

I actually wanted to be a teacher when I was 10 or 11, then I realised how hard it was — but there's still time. Then I wanted to be an archaeologist. I think that had something to do with Indiana Jones

FE Week on location

Our Mann's impressed with Nottinghamshire college

Laying bricks, an afternoon jam with talented music students and a relaxing manicure were just some of the activities I enjoyed while visiting West Nottinghamshire College, writes Shane Mann.

My visit, with FE Week editor Nick Linford, began with a tour of the college's Ashfield centre.

Working in partnership with the Inspire & Achieve Foundation, the centre works with under 24-year-olds that are not in education, employment or training (Neets).

Offering flexible courses, predominately at level one, the venue aims to act as a spring-board for Neets onto higher level courses.

We then dropped into the college's construction skills centre, in Kirkby-in-Ashfield, which trains students in trades from bricklaying to rail track engineering.

The centre has a unique open plan design, containing study areas and scaled-down class-

rooms. Then it was time to get creative at Vision, the college's creative arts centre providing media, music and performance courses.

Here we learned about the college's student-led TV station — called visioncreate.tv — and I become a band member, bashing the drums.

Finally, we visited the college's hair and beauty commercial wing, called Revive.

As a persistent nail-biter, it was fitting for me to undergo a brief manicure before dinner.

The enjoyable experience provoked a professional frown from my beautician, when she inspected my chewed nails.

Revive, along with the college's training restaurant, is housed at a newly-opened £11m centre at its Mansfield campus.

We were following in the footsteps of Skills Minister Matthew Hancock, who had a similar tour two weeks earlier (pictured below).



Principal Asha Khemka OBE welcomes Nick Linford (left) and Shane Mann (right)



- 6
- 1) Jamie Fairless, 16, from Mansfield, shows me how to build a brick wall

2) Mr Hancock has a go at building a brick wall during his visit on Friday, October 4

3) Level one automotive maintenance and repair student Keeley Boulton, aged 19, from Kirkby-in-Ashfield, instructs me on how to fit brake shoes on a car

4) Level three professional cookery apprentice Ian Heslop enlists me to help in preparing a meal in the kitchens of Refined — a fine-dining restaurant open to the public

5) Me having a jam with music students Elliott Wheeler (left), of South Normanton, studying level three extended diploma in music and Tim Utting (centre), of Alfreton, studying Level three extended diploma in music technology

6) Level two beauty therapy student Lucy Gilby, aged 16, from Mansfield, gives me a manicure
- Photos by Richard Skelthorn

How I became

the help that disabled students deserve

Of course it's right that students with disabilities and long term health conditions should get extra support.

Because access to education – access to success, if you like – is a right. It's not a privilege. Everyone should have the opportunity to reach their full potential, whatever their situation. As a Student Support Worker, it's my role to help them achieve that – whether it's taking notes or offering guidance on structuring their work and their time. I'm proud to be the one providing the one-to-one attention; it's essential for the students and I have to say it's very rewarding for me. At the end of the day, every day, it's good to know you've helped someone who needs it. In fact it's a win-win-win, because the institute gets the best out of all its students. When Randstad help to place someone in one of these roles, it benefits far more people than that person alone.

Randstad Student Support has been working with further and higher education establishments since 2002 to help support students with disabilities. Improving student outcomes and helping them achieve their academic potential. We'd love your students to become part of the success story.

Visit randstad.co.uk/howibecame to find out more or call 0845 130 4655.

Adam Lee
student support worker

Recommended by You



FE Week Q&A

The Baker's dozen you wanted answering

Reporter Rebecca Cooney puts 13 questions to chair of the Baker Dearing Educational Trust and former Conservative Education Secretary Lord Baker.

- 1. How many Career Colleges would you like to see in 10 years' time?**
I'd like to see as many as the market can hold, and the market is the number of employers who want them.
- 2. How many University Technical Colleges (UTCs) would you like to see in 10 years' time?**
Again I'd like to see as many as we can get. David Cameron has just said he wants to see a UTC in every major town of the country. It depends how you define major, but that's many more than what we've got at the moment.
- 3. Which sector do you see there being the most need for UTCs in?**
If you take all the industries, and mechanical industries, electrical industry, agricultural industries or computing industries, they are massively short on skills. At a UTC in Wigan I met representatives of the food processing industry who said they were 100,000 short or technicians and they didn't know what to do.
- 4. Which sector do you see there being the most need for Career Colleges in?**

- Certainly catering, hospitality and tourism. I think also in the health and care side — residential care, social care, family care, child care, parental care.
- 5. Do you still think that failing colleges should be made into UTCs as you wrote in a column for The Times in November last year?**
I still believe, yes, if any college or school is really failing, if you can't get it right, you close the school and open again as a different institution, a UTC or career college.
 - 6. Given a choice, would you send your child to a Careers College or a UTC?**
It would depend entirely on the talent of my child. If it was a STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] subject then a UTC would be a wonderful start, if it was somebody interested in the creative industries, for example, arts, theatre and music, I'd say go to a Career College.
 - 7. What are your thoughts on direct recruitment at 14 for general FE Colleges?**
Let's wait and see. It's a tremendous transformation for an FE college. They don't have to have a Career College, but I think already several are saying that some of them want to do it.
 - 8. How do you think Matthew Hancock is**



- performing as Skills Minister?**
Very well, he's a very gifted person. He's very ambitious but he's also very able. He goes down very well in the FE world, there's no question about that.
- 9. How do you think Michael Gove is performing as Education Secretary?**

- He's doing very well, he's trying to drive up standards in schools and good luck to him.
- 10. Do you think David Cameron can win the next general election?**
Yes.
 - 11. Do you think he can win it without the need for a coalition?**
Now that's more difficult to say. Maybe we are moving into an era of coalition politics, but I think he has the capacity to win certainly the most number of seats and that could well be an overall majority.
 - 12. It seems that today young people are portrayed in a number of different ways, from being unwilling to get a job, or being unable to get a job. What do you think of this generation of young people?**
I think this generation of young people is very imaginative, they are very adaptable to new technologies, no question about that at all. And they want better opportunities, in life and they're not getting them. There a million young unemployed people in our country and that's an absolute disgrace.
 - 13. Would you like to see Spitting Image return?**
Yes, I enjoy satire, I've written books on satire and all politicians love to be caricatured.

FE Week experts



Prison education and training came under the spotlight last week in a critical speech by Ofsted's FE and skills director Matthew Coffey. But he also made a number of recommendations that have earned him praise from Rod Clark.

Grading of good, or maybe even outstanding, to Matthew Coffey for highlighting the need to improve prison education. This resonated for me as chief executive of Prisoners Education Trust, a charity that has worked to rehabilitate prisoners through education for almost 25 years. But there will be huge challenges ahead for implementing a learning culture that meets the needs of all prisoners. This is a period of unprecedented change in criminal justice affecting a prison system that

Ofsted director Coffey wins praise for prison talk

wrestles with the inherent challenges of an often transient, deeply troubled prisoner population in an age of financial cutbacks. Given that, how far can Ofsted's specific recommendations go in addressing the problems?

“Few prison qualifications carry credibility with employers”

I would like to focus on two of Mr Coffey's recommendations that are central to the way education is configured within the prison itself; that prison governors should have more responsibility for education provision and for targets to be based on prisoners gaining vocational and employment-related skills at level two and above. Some would argue that since the start of the current round Offender Learning and Skills Service (Olass) contracts, governors have, in theory, already got the lead on education. That role is set to become both more complex and important in future. Such clarity of accountability will be essential when 21 new 'Community Rehabilitation Companies' manage the transition out of custody and will only be paid if prisoners do not reoffend.

More than 70 prisons will also have their roles re-cast as resettlement prisons for one 'Contract Package Area', meaning there needs to be a single point of authority to ensure that delivery from education providers supports that goal, particularly as some will contain two different Olass providers. If the prison governor does not manage all these players and the process between what happens in custody and its connection through the prison gate, who else should? These are issues we are exploring along with 16 other members of the Prisoner Learning Alliance. The other recommendation raises an even more fundamental question: what is prison education for? To give a person the knowledge, skills and motivation to move them away from a life of crime towards a more positive future would be our answer. For many, the answer is simply employment. Of course this is important, research shows that ex-prisoners with jobs are half as likely to reoffend, but at the moment most people leaving prison haven't got the skills or training they need to progress. Few prison qualifications carry credibility with employers and this is one of the reasons our organisation helps prisoners access courses at level two and above. We fund a wide range of accredited courses in further and higher education via distance learning, but recent changes to the Olass

contracts and the introduction of student loans have caused huge disruption for prisoners. Of most concern, as the future is increasingly moving to an ICT model, is prisoners' poor access to computers and lack of controlled access to the internet for online courses or e-learning resources as part of a blended learning model. Without a significant step change in ICT access in prison, progression will become even more difficult. It is also important to note that employers seek more than technical competence. They expect employees to have the life skills that are needed to equip anyone to return to life as a fully engaged citizen. Many prisoners may not be able to relate constructively to others and few have self-belief and resilience in the face of likely discrimination from prospective employers when they leave prison. Therefore without support to gain such basic life skills, we will be turning out prisoners fit for neither employment nor for playing an active role in society.

Rod Clark, chief executive, Prisoners Education Trust

Visit www.feweek.co.uk for an expert piece on prison education by Dr Paul Phillips OBE, principal of North Somerset's Weston College, which holds a contract to deliver education in 13 prisons across South West England

FE Week campus round-up

sponsored by **empra**



Seascape makes splash in photo competition

A photographic student's picture of dark clouds over the Bristol Channel has been shortlisted in a national photographic competition.

Ed French, who is studying a level three BTEC extended diploma in photography at Weston College, Somerset, captured the image last year.

He said: "I like how the sea meets the sky and is divided by the land. I altered it slightly to give it a blueish tone because I thought it enhanced it."

Ed entered the photo into the National Historic Ships Photography Competition 2013, in the Young Photographer Historic Ship or Seascape category.

The image has been shortlisted, along with four others in its category, ahead of more than 500 other entered photographs.

The winner will be announced at a reception on board HMS Belfast, in London, on October 23.



Shortlisted Ed French, aged 16, and his shortlisted photo (inset)



Umair Asif, Fiona Dewhurst and Sarah Kendall helped with university research this summer

Hands-on science and maths work experience

A-level students got hands-on experience of professional scientific and mathematical research.

Nelson and Colne College Sixth Form students Sarah Kendall, aged 24, Fiona Dewhurst and Umair Asif, both 17, joined placements on university summer research projects.

Their involvement was organised by Nuffield Foundation charitable trust.

Sarah worked on a project studying

brain damage associated with strokes at Manchester University.

She said: "The experience was brilliant. I loved the lab environment and it confirmed to me I am heading for the right career area."

Fiona helped research spectroscopy — how energy interacts with matter — also at Manchester.

Umair went to the University of Central Lancashire to work on simulating how galaxies form, using computer programming.

Plastic frocks bag designers place on the catwalk

Fashion and textile students took to the catwalk with clothes made entirely from recycled plastic shopping bags.

The Chelmsford College level three BTEC learners showed off their garments at the intu Lakeside shopping centre, in Essex, alongside fashion displays from the centre's shops, which donated the shopping bags for the students' creations.

Julie Leahy, curriculum leader for the art and design faculty, said: "The students were extremely excited about being involved in such a high-profile show."

"They have worked extremely hard, with a professional approach."

Students used bonding, stitching, knitting and weaving to create wearable upcycled outfits.

Audience member Jeni Bayliss said: "The outfits were fabulous and when I realised what they were made from I was completely amazed."



First year textile student Ella Chandler Lewis, aged 18, modelling a dress made as a collaboration between all first and second year students. Photography Daniel Jones

Food festival develops new catering skills



Ryan Partington, aged 18, and Alex Cowlshaw, 17, on front of house duty at The Glass House

Catering students helped to bring Manchester Food and Drink Festival to Salford City College.

Working with chefs from award-winning local restaurant Grenache, they prepared and served a gourmet meal for guests at a festival-related event in the college's training

restaurant, The Glass House.

Student Adam Wright, aged 17, said: "We've learned a lot while working alongside the Grenache chefs."

"The experience has taught us lots of new skills and taught us to cope well under pressure."

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

FE Week campus round-up



From right: Florist Lauren Henderson with new apprentice Danielle Johnson

Blossoming florist takes on apprentice

Business is blooming for a young florist who has taken on an apprentice from her old college.

Lauren Henderson, aged 21, completed level three floristry at East Durham College last year, before opening her shop in July.

"It's been a mad few weeks, but business is going really well," she said. The shop, in Sunderland, is named Ray of Sunshine in honour of Lauren's grandfather, Ray.

It has quickly become so popular that Lauren has been able to take on 25-year-old Danielle Johnson as an apprentice.

"I loved my time at college," said Lauren, who initially started A-levels before switching to floristry.

"I still keep in touch with my old lecturers, who continue to give me advice and guidance today, and the same lecturers are also now helping Danielle."

Students put icing on the cake for port party



PD Ports' youngest Tees Dock employee Aadir Hassan, aged 19, puts the finishing touches to the 50th birthday cake, helped by Middlesbrough College level three patisserie and confectionery students Holly Stanley (left) and Sam Harvey, both 18

Catering students baked a giant cake for 300 people to celebrate a container port's 50th anniversary.

Tees Dock, in Middlesbrough, which is managed by PD Ports, was officially opened in 1963 and now employs 650 people.

Sixteen students from Middlesbrough College took three days to prepare and bake a giant birthday cake — along with 500 cupcakes — for an anniversary family fun day. Zoe Lewis, Middlesbrough College

principal, said: "We were thrilled to be asked to make the centrepiece for PD Ports' celebrations.

"It's testament to the skill and professionalism of our students, and working on projects of this size ensures our students are ready for work when they complete their studies."

Middlesbrough College and PD Ports joined forces in 2011 to deliver a set of training programmes for more than 70 port employees.



From left: Havering College principal Maria Thompson and Angela Watkinson MP

'Home-from-home' for special needs students

Havering College of Further and Higher Education has transformed the home of its former caretaker into a state-of-the-art facility for students with learning disabilities, including those on the autistic spectrum.

The London college spent £420,000 on the plush new facility, known as The Bungalow, which will feature a sensory room with fibre optics and bubble tubes, twin bedrooms — for overnight stays — and a garden with specialised fitness equipment.

The idea is it will help students with

learning disabilities adjust to college life, by providing them with a home-from-home environment.

Amanda Heary, whose 17-year-old daughter now attends The Bungalow, said: "I feel very fortunate that my daughter has a place here.

"She was definitely not ready to make the step straight into college but her transition into The Bungalow is personalised and it is going really well."

Angela Watkinson, MP for Hornchurch and Upminster, cut the ribbon at the official opening ceremony.

Donning denim raises hundreds for charity



Students showing off their denim jeans

Students and staff from Doncaster College took part in Jeans for Genes Day.

They discarded their normal attire and wore denim, in return for a £1 donation to the Genetic Disorders UK charity.

After donning their straight leg, flared retros, boot cuts, jeggings, skinnys, dungarees and "Daisy Dukes", nearly £885 was raised.

College spokesperson Tina Harrison said: "We were very pleased to be able to raise a

substantial sum of money and also awareness of such an important charity. The students were really supportive of it."

She singled out students and staff involved with childcare courses for particular praise, as they raised £210 towards the total.

Jeans for Genes Day took place on September 20 and is on September 19 next year. It raises money for the Genetic Disorders UK charity.

Sarah's hopes for a Paralympic end to years of pain

FEATURED
CAMPUS
ROUND-UP

After enduring dozens of painful operations over the last six years, equine student Sarah Underwood is hoping to compete in the dressage at the 2020 Paralympics, writes Anisa Fatima.

A college student who has undergone 30 operations since 2007 has been given a former race horse to help fulfil her dream of competing in the Paralympics.

Sarah Underwood, aged 34, from Bolton, is studying for a British Horse Society teaching qualification at Myerscough College, in Lancashire, and dreams of competing in the dressage at the 2020 Tokyo Games.

She suffers nerve problems in her left leg, as well as her hands and wrists, walks with a limp and often needs crutches to stay mobile.

Her disabilities resulted from complications during routine surgery in 2007. This led to 29 further operations and she only narrowly escaped having her leg amputated.

Sarah had originally planned to represent Team GB in both wheelchair fencing and disability shooting at the 2012 Paralympics, but surgery prevented her from being available for selection.

But she refused to let that disappointment hold her back and has started training for

future Paralympic glory on a nine-year-old former racehorse, called Fleur, which was given to her by The Anders Foundation charity.

"Although the whole story is a bit tragic, I just think that I am so lucky because it has led me to create lots opportunities to meet lots of lovely new people," said Sarah.

"Yes, I will need surgery for the rest of my life, but it is what it is."

She added she could not believe her luck when the charity, which helps disabled and able-bodied young people achieve their sporting dreams, gave her the horse.

"Hopefully, with a lot of hard work, I will now be able to improve my riding ability, get the horse to the next level and acquire sponsorship to get me to the Paralympics," said Sarah. She also works with the Riding for the Disabled Association and was even invited by Princess Anne to a reception at Buckingham Palace earlier this year in recognition of her efforts.

Sarah has maintained a positive outlook throughout her many setbacks and had good advice for other people forced to learn to live with disabilities. "You can either waste your life feeling dreadful or suck it up and get on with it," she said.

"The more you fill your life, it shrinks the impact of the disability. It's just a part of your life then rather than being the main focus."

Anyone interested in providing sponsorship can email sarah_underwood@hotmail.com



Sarah Underwood and her horse Fleur



Anisa Fatima, aged 18, is studying A-level English language and literature, history and sociology at Newham College.

She has been doing work experience in the *FE Week* and is now considering a career in journalism. Here is her first published article.

If one of your learners would like to write for *FE Week*, email news@feweek.co.uk and outline the story they would like to submit.

Body artist makes mark with gift business



Ambreen Iqbal aged 23, with her a stall of her creations

A young designer is turning traditional body art and the skills she learned at college into a thriving gift business.

Inspired by traditional Indian *mehndi*, or henna tattoo designs, former Cleveland College of Art and Design HE textile and surface design student Ambreen Iqbal, 23, has created a range of home decorations and wedding gifts.

"The designs are so versatile they can be

adapted to anything," said Ambreen.

Ambreen's business is called To Gift. She is selling her creations at craft and wedding fairs, markets, house parties and online at facebook.com/togiftuk. "I'm always working just to keep up with demand," she said.

"CCAD really gave me the confidence and skills to succeed and I'm so proud of what I've achieved."

MOVERS & SHAKERS

Your weekly guide to who's new and who's leaving

A new principal has been appointed at Redbridge College, in Essex.

Ann Thunhurst, who previously ran the Joint Information Systems Committee's (Jisc) regional support centre for the South East, while also serving as the director of business development for JISC Advance, takes over from Theresa Drowley OBE, who retains the post of chief executive.

Ilford-born Mrs Thunhurst, who studied at Waltham Forest College (WFC), where she took City and Guilds qualifications after leaving school, said: "Because I began my career via the vocational route, I think Redbridge College and I make a perfect match.

"I have been able to combine my vocational and academic expertise — overlaying technology on top of that — to help my understanding of how innovation can benefit our learners."

She added: "This is a good college with outstanding features according to Ofsted,



Ann Thunhurst

and I don't plan to fix anything that isn't broken. Inevitably though, in order to move forward, we will need to change things.

"The new educational landscape is providing us with huge opportunities that simply have not been there in the past."

Send your stories with pictures to news@feweek.co.uk including names, ages and course of students where applicable

If you want to let us know of any new faces at the top of your college or training provider, please let us know by emailing news@feweek.co.uk

Jobs



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Competitive rates available, depending on experience

These vacancies are all based at our CATCH site in Stallingborough.

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James Danby - Head of Industrial Programmes
01469 552867/07557207435 or email danbyj@grimsby.ac.uk

Closing date: Monday 28th October 2013

Download an application form at:
www.latestvacancies.com/grimsby



AN OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITY FOR AN EXCEPTIONAL INDIVIDUAL....

Deputy Principal: Curriculum, Performance and Innovation
c£92,000

Kirklees College is a large successful FE college, operating across seven vocational centres and 40 community based centres across Huddersfield and Dewsbury. With an income of £45million we offer a broad curriculum to 21,000 students.

We are seeking to appoint an inspirational leader to maintain the College's excellent track record and drive us towards even greater success in the future. You will champion high quality teaching, learning and assessment throughout the College.

Through innovative leadership of our FE and HE curriculum, promotion of excellence and a proactive approach to income diversification, you will ensure that we deliver outstanding results and secure our future as a first class resource for our community.

We are seeking a talented individual who will play a key role in continuing our journey towards excellence. With a strong track record in curriculum innovation and quality assurance together with a creative and visionary leadership style, our successful candidate will have the ability to develop and implement holistic strategies, motivate a high performing workforce and leverage new opportunities. You will continue to raise the profile of the College, be an accomplished people manager and someone who can engage with staff, students, governors, employers and the College's wider community.

For more information and an application pack please contact HR Department, Waterfront Quarter, Manchester Road, Huddersfield, HD1 3HH, or electronically to jobs@kirkleescollege.ac.uk

Closing date: Wednesday 6th November 2013 at 12 noon.

The selection centre will take place on 26 and 27 November 2013.

Our senior leadership team is currently under-represented in all BME categories; we therefore particularly welcome applications from candidates within these groups.



Full time and Part time Lecturer Opportunities in English and maths



Various hours per week - Hertford Regional College – Ware and Broxbourne Campuses

ABOUT THE JOB

You will be responsible for the effective and efficient operation of the English or maths learning and teaching programmes for the Department of English and maths at the Ware and Broxbourne Campuses.

ABOUT YOU

You will need to have a relevant degree qualification and a teaching qualification such as DTLLS, PGCE or CertEd and demonstrate a passion for teaching. Experience of delivering teaching and learning or training in ideally a post 16 environment is essential.

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SALARY: £25,650 - £32,700 pro rata per annum plus £1,000 pro rata per annum market forces allowance

CLOSING DATE: ONGOING

If you wish to contact us, please email: hr@hrc.ac.uk

For more details, please refer to the HRC Website and the relevant Job Description and Person Specification.

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**Curriculum Leader,
Creative Arts and Media (Job Ref: FW813)**
Salary: £43,290 p.a. Full-time 37 hours per week

This senior role is responsible for the leadership and management of the strategic development of Creative Arts, Performing Arts and Media. Applicants should have the leadership skills required to run a curriculum team effectively, having responsibility for the development and delivery of the provision and the staff within the area. Curriculum Leaders direct teaching, monitor the performance of courses and the quality of the student experience to achieve the College's strategic aims. The successful applicant should have a degree level qualification in the arts or media and a full teaching qualification. Applicants should have experience of effective operational management, and be skilled in planning, people management and quality improvement. They should also have strong leadership skills, be a good communicator and an effective team player, and have a commitment to helping us make Shrewsbury College the provider of the best vocational education and training in Shropshire.

To apply or for more information please visit
www.shrewsbury.ac.uk/jobs.
CVs are not accepted

Closing date is 31 October 2013.



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If you have a background in Engineering and would like to work in the educational sector this is a superb opportunity to work for a forward looking College, and share your knowledge and skills with the next generation of Engineers.

As a Lecturer you will be responsible for managing the learning process of Engineering students, guiding and supporting students, preparing teaching materials and assessing students' work. You will contribute to a crucial aspect of the Directorate's strategic objective to provide an exceptional student experience.

The Directorate is also seeking to expand its pool of academic and professionally qualified staff to help us deliver high quality teaching and learning. Opportunities exist to teach on a range of Engineering Courses and the College is seeking well qualified Engineers with relevant industrial experience and specialist subject knowledge.

The College welcomes applications from individuals at any stage of their careers who consider that they have the potential to play a significant or leading role in the future development of our Engineering provision.

All appointments are subject to a satisfactory Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check and receipt of two satisfactory references.

Middlesbrough College is an equal opportunities employer and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

This is a fantastic opportunity for Engineering professionals to develop their career within a leading educational institution. The Directorate of Engineering and Computing is a cross disciplinary department that delivers training and education in a wide range of Engineering disciplines.

The College is seeking to appoint a number of staff to work in the Engineering and Computing Department.

Permanent Opportunities in Engineering & Computing

Instructor Demonstrator in Welding
Lecturers in Electrical & Electronic Engineering
Lecturer in Engineering - Process Plant
Lecturer in Engineering - Mechanical Maintenance
Lecturer in Engineering - Mechanical
Assessor in Information Technology
Assessor in Motor Vehicle
Lecturer in Motor Vehicle
Lecturer in Computing
Lecturers in Welding (Full and Part-time)

Applications by CV to dl.chadwick@mbro.ac.uk no later than 12 noon 30 October 2013, or bring your CV to our Open Evening with the Engineering and Computing Management Team on Tuesday 29th October from 5.00pm onwards.





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FE Week Sudoku challenge

	9	7				8		
		6		4	5			2
	1						6	
			1	3			8	
3		2				7		6
	8			5	6			
	6			1			4	
7			8	9		6		
		1				3	2	

Difficulty:
EASY

How to play: Fill in all blank squares making sure that each row, column and 3 by 3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9

Solutions: Next week

1	3			8				
		2	4		6		5	
							2	
3						7		
	7	5	9		1	8	4	
		4						3
	8							
	4		6		2	9		
				5			6	4

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

Last Week’s solutions

4	9	7	6	2	1	8	3	5
8	3	6	9	4	5	1	7	2
2	1	5	3	7	8	4	6	9
6	7	9	1	3	2	5	8	4
3	5	2	4	8	9	7	1	6
1	8	4	7	5	6	2	9	3
5	6	8	2	1	3	9	4	7
7	2	3	8	9	4	6	5	1
9	4	1	5	6	7	3	2	8

Difficulty:
EASY

1	6	8	3	9	4	5	2	7
7	3	4	1	2	5	9	8	6
5	9	2	8	7	6	4	1	3
9	1	5	6	8	6	7	4	2
3	2	7	5	4	9	1	6	8
8	4	6	7	1	2	3	5	9
4	5	3	9	6	8	2	7	1
2	8	1	4	3	7	6	9	5
6	7	9	2	5	1	8	3	4

Difficulty:
MEDIUM

FE Week mini-mascot

Follow the adventures of *FE Week’s* biggest and smallest fan!



“Mostly this week I’ve been pushing my baby brother around”

You can also follow our *FE Week* mini-mascot on Twitter [@daniellinford](https://twitter.com/daniellinford)